

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A system for reducing oxidation of a semiconductor device, comprising:

a holding device for securing a lead frame for the semiconductor device to a platform, the holding device including an opening providing access by a bonding tool to an area where the semiconductor device is to be heated;

the holding device further including a cover, the cover defining a hollow cavity located adjacent to the opening;

a gas inlet in fluid communication with the cavity and the opening for supplying a relatively inert gas; and

the holding device further defining a conduit connecting the gas inlet and hollow cavity, the conduit having a smaller cross-sectional area than the cavity, the conduit for transmitting the inert gas to the opening through the cavity.

2. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the cavity is configured such that the inert gas supplied to the cavity is directed away from an outlet connecting the cavity to the opening.

3. – 5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gas inlet is formed in the holding device.

7. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gas inlet is formed in the platform.

8. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein a space is defined between the holding device and the platform for receiving the inert gas from the gas inlet and for distributing the inert gas over a surface of the electronic device.

9. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 8, wherein the space is connected to the said opening for distributing an amount of the inert gas directly from the space to the opening.

10. (Previously Presented) A system as claimed in claim 8, wherein the conduit links the cavity and the space and channels an amount of the inert gas from the space to the cavity.

11. – 16. (Canceled)